

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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## Soviet Railroads

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. When I last traveled between Omsk and Sverdlovsk [ ] the railroad was single-tracked, but I cannot recall whether I went through Tyumen or Kurgan. In July 1951 the Sverdlovsk-Kazan-Arzamas-Moscow line was also single tracked. I noticed no electrification along any parts of the above lines. However, most of the Ural industrial region in and around the Chelyabinsk, Sverdlovsk and Nizhne Tagil area had electric railroad lines.

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2. I cannot quite recall the average distance, in either kilometers or time, traveled between sidings. However, it seems to me that there were quite a number of them and I think that the distance between sidings must surely have been less than 50 kilometers.

3. I noticed no construction of new lines or branches, double-tracking, or electrification along the Omsk-Sverdlovsk and the Sverdlovsk-Kazan-Arzamas-Moscow lines. There was considerable electrification in the Ural industrial area but I cannot give any information on the extent, type, or location of any of this work.

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Roadbed and Track Description

4. The condition of the roadbed and track was excellent and every attempt was made to maintain the railroads in the best of condition. Rails, ties, spikes and ballast, which consisted of sand covered with gravel, were checked constantly and any repair work needed was carried out quickly.
5. While traveling on the above-mentioned lines I observed repair work being done on rails and ties on several occasions. I recall one instance when my train was held up for five or ten minutes while a section of rail was replaced.
6. Stacks of ties, coated with tar, were in evidence at frequent intervals along the railroad lines. Repair crews, many of whom were women, were seen frequently on all the lines which I traveled.

Rolling Stock

7. I observed many types of freight cars, including tank cars, box cars, flat cars, gondolas, and refrigerator cars, and they all seemed to be in very good condition. I can give no additional information except that there seemed to be more metal used, particularly on the sides of flat cars, than before and during the war. (In regard to the condition of the rolling stock I would again like to emphasize the strict discipline exercised on the railroads). Although practically all the freight cars which I observed were four-axled, I vaguely recollect having seen some five or six-axled freight cars but cannot recall the location of the additional axles. I cannot recall seeing any new cars but I feel that any new cars would quickly assume the appearance of old cars because of the extent to which all rolling stock is used.
8. I observed many cars standing idle on sidings but I think they were awaiting shipment or transshipment inasmuch as the great demand for freight cars precludes any rolling stock standing idle and unused for any great length of time. There were very few open cars which were empty and there was no way to find out whether the covered cars were loaded. Most of the open cars were loaded with lumber and some of them had automotive vehicles, tanks, turbines, and artillery, but I cannot recall types, location or quantity of these items. The present trend is to ship tanks and other military equipment in covered cars or at night.
9. The only types of locomotives which I saw were steam and electric, the latter in the Ural industrial region only. I think that most of the locomotives were fairly new, ten years or less.

Traffic

10. Rail traffic was very heavy on all the lines which I traveled, particularly those lines leading in and out of Moscow, but I cannot estimate the amount of traffic for any given length of time or distance. At no time did I observe any bottlenecks; in fact, the railroad system is one of the most efficient branches of Soviet industry from the point of view of schedules, maintenance and traffic. No freight train congestion was encountered on any of the lines, or on the approaches to Moscow, Omsk, Sverdlovsk or Brest. I cannot recall any unusually heavy eastbound freight traffic on any part of the Sverdlovsk-Omsk line.

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Operation of Trains

11. Upon arrival in Brest I was transferred from the Soviet train onto a German train bound for Berlin. Brest was the only place where a change of trains was necessary. The only comment I can make on this transfer is that the German train seemed to be quite old. I noticed no third rail or a standard European gauge track running parallel to the Soviet wide gauge track on the line between Brest and the Polish frontier.
12. I observed no rolling stock with unusual wheel arrangements or any installation where car wheels or trucks might be changed in the vicinity of Brest.

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